

Maryland

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REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

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MARYLAND PENITENTIARY,

TO VISIT THE

Penitentiaries and Prisons

IN THE

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA AND STATE OF NEW YORK.

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1828.

MARYLAND PENITENTIARY.

*To the Board of Directors of the
Maryland Penitentiary.*

The committee appointed by a resolution of the Board of Directors," to Visit the several Penitentiaries and Prisons in Philadelphia and in the state of New York, in order to collect the best information relative to the contemplated improvement—as also to the manner of conducting the police regulations and commercial operations of the same," Respectfully

REPORT,

That they proceeded to the several Prisons comprehended in the view of the resolution, and were enabled by the facilities afforded them by their respective officers, to obtain extensive minutes respecting their various operations.

To the polite attentions of Col. Swift and Mr. Price, directors of the Pennsylvania County Prison, in Walnut street, Philadelphia, they are indebted for such information as will be communicated in relation to that Institution,—and to the former, for introduction to the County Jail and new State Prison and the details respecting them.

Many thanks are due to the Keepers of the House of Refuge in New York, for the advantages afforded by them to the committee for acquiring intelligence of their admirable discipline, the various particulars belonging to it, and the effects consequent upon it.

From Mr. Powers, Agent and Keeper of the New York State Prison at Auburn, and his excellent report on the regulations es-

tablished in it, they have derived much valuable information in regard to the systematic discipline of that extensive and well conducted Institution.

To Capt. Lynds, Superintendent of the State Prison at Sing Sing, they are under many obligations, both for his communications on the subject of the Sing Sing Prison, and his observations on the general principles by which the Penitentiary system should be directed.

From the whole they select such as they deem of importance to the object of their appointment, and submit them in the order in which they were collected, together with occasional remarks as follows.

PENNSYLVANIA COUNTY PRISON.

The Pennsylvania County Prison, situated in Walnut street, Philadelphia, is under the direction of a Board of fifteen Inspectors, who are appointed from various sections of counties, and whose general duties are, to prescribe rules for the government of the Prison, to elect officers and provide for the proper employment of the convicts. The Treasurer, who is one of the Board, and a Committee of that body, meet once in two weeks to concert the proper measures for the conduct of the financial concerns of the house. The more immediate officers, are a Keeper, Clerk, and eleven Deputy Keepers, whose duties are confined to the internal operations of the Institution, and do not vary from the ordinary routine performed by those officers in the common prison discipline.

The front house in Walnut street contains, in the upper stories the various prison offices, and in the basement, the kitchen, bake-house, and eating-hall. The shops are arranged in circular form around the yard, and the enclosed area is filled by stone sawyers. General mechanical branches are conducted for supplying the wants of the Institution, but weaving and the sawing of stone, are the only branches from which any revenue is derived. The number of looms at present employed is seventy-six; the daily task, about fifteen yards; the quality of the cloth man-

ufactured is good, and is sold very readily at auction, at thirteen cents per yard.

The Institution has hitherto failed to support itself and the deficiency has been supplied by the State; but, owing to the complex and extended form in which the accounts are kept, no accurate information could be obtained as to the yearly amount required for this purpose. The annual expense for the salaries of officers is as follows:

Keeper,	\$ 900
Clerk,	1,000
Eleven Deputy Keepers at \$750 each,	8,250
	<hr/>
	\$10,150
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The number at present confined, is five hundred and sixty-four, of whom seventy-eight are females. The crowded condition of the yard and work-shops, and the irregularity of the buildings, removing entirely every facility of inspection, have rendered impossible, the establishment of a regular and effective system of discipline; the number of cells also, is so limited, that it is necessary to confine from twenty to thirty prisoners at night in one room. With the disadvantages of limited space, great numbers and crowded night rooms, it is not a subject of wonder that the Walnut street Prison has been celebrated as a nursery of vice. Such it has been, by the admission of the officers themselves, and such must inevitably be any prison that does not afford to officers the opportunity of constant vigilance over its inmates. Regulations for the preservation of health, have been carefully attended to; their sleeping rooms are cleanly, the prisoners bathe once per month, and the provision is of good and wholesome quality and abundantly furnished.

Solitary imprisonment, with the usual accompaniment of bread and water diet, is the only mode of punishment here practised; and for serious misdemeanors, is sometimes extended to the utmost limit of endurance. The convict upon whom it is inflicted is placed under the care of the attending physician, and the lat-

ter is empowered to grant a temporary release, whenever a longer continuation might threaten serious consequences—thus is the convict dealt with until he becomes completely humbled.

The Committee regard this exclusive mode of punishment, lengthened as it often is to the term of eight or nine months, as objectionable in many respects. It cannot be considered equitable, because it is not equal in its bearing. Constitution and previous habits of life may enable one to endure it with infinitely less of suffering, than an accomplice in the same offence who may be differently constituted. Attendance on the occupants of solitary cells, is a source of much superfluous labour, and their cessation from employment a considerable loss. It wastes the physical energies, and often plants the germ of incurable disease.

An estimate of the effects of the general system of punishment in this prison, may be formed from the number of its recommitments, which have been about one to three,—a proportion enormously large, and a melancholy comment on the danger of mingling the various grades of crime without imposing a judicious and salutary discipline.

It is mentioned as one of the evils of this prison, that its Board of Directors is too large—that their number, instead of facilitating, tends to embarrass their proceedings when it is necessary to act in a body.

THE COUNTY JAIL IN PHILADELPHIA

Is entrusted to the care of the same inspectors, is supplied from the same fund, and is well conducted—the sleeping rooms are spacious, airy and cleanly—the provision sound and wholesome—and the conduct of the prisoners, indicative of excellent discipline. Besides serving the ordinary purposes of a Jail, it is used as a house of correction for vagrants, who are sentenced to various short terms of confinement by magistrates. It is remarkable for a total absence of the filth, noise and intemperance, which, for the want of similar regulations, are too often found in prisons of this kind.

THE NEW STATE PRISON

Is built on an elevated site, two and a half miles north east of the City, and within half a mile of the Schuylkill river. The external wall thirty feet high, encloses a square, each side of which extends six hundred and fifty feet, and has a tower for a guard at each corner. The Keeper's house, Hospital and Physician's offices, form a part of the south wall. From an observatory in the centre of the yard, the blocks of cells diverge in seven lines, and will contain when completed, two hundred and fifty-two—they are built on each side of spacious passages, from which the convicts may be seen through small square apertures in the walls of the cells, which the keeper may open and close at pleasure. The ranges of cells are one story in height, and attached to each is an exercising yard which afford the only means of entrance. The cells are twelve feet long and eight wide, and are ventilated by several holes, three inches in diameter, passing through the wall into the exercising yard, and by flues through the wall between the cell and the passage, about ten feet above the floor.

It is proposed that water and heated air shall be admitted into the cells by the convicts, from ducts containing each, extending along the passages beneath the floor. Cast iron pipes, similarly situated, and to be frequently filled with currents of water, will convey the filth from the cells. The wall, keeper's house, and its appendages, with three blocks of cells are completed—they are built of hard granite, on the most expensive plan, and are finished with every architectural elegance. The wall and buildings already erected, have exceeded in cost, four hundred thousand dollars, and the whole, if continued on the original plan, will have cost, on their completion, probably not less than six hundred thousand. That the progress in building has been suspended, is owing to the failure of the legislature at the late session to make any further appropriation in aid of the undertaking; and it remains a doubt whether the system of total solitary confinement will ever be fully carried into effect. A Committee of the Le-

gislature, appointed, in 1825, for the purpose of examining various Penitentiaries in the New England States, Maryland and New York, have reported unfavorably to the principle, and general public sentiment appears averse to its application.

An experiment of solitary confinement was made at the Auburn Prison, by direction of the Legislature, in 1821, with eighty of the convicts. Every necessary attention in regard to their health, that was rendered practicable by the construction of the cells, was observed during the term of about eighteen months. At the expiration of that period, the Governor of the State visited the Prison and examined personally their condition. The shattered state of their health, the effect upon the minds of many in whom insanity was the result, and attempted suicides in three cases, determined him to pardon them all successively, as their names should be rendered him by the inspectors. This measure was justified by the circumstance that their mode of punishment had been changed from that to which they were originally sentenced, to one more severe. The total failure of this experiment caused its abandonment, and it has never since been resorted to.

It is not the intention of the Committee to intimate that the same entire results must follow a confinement in the Philadelphia Prison; on the contrary, the means adopted for the physical comfort of the convict while in his cell, and the provision made for a portion of daily exercise, are such as they believe will suffice to the preservation of his health, if properly administered. But it is the design at present to afford no employment to the mind, that might divert it from its own harrowing reflections;—that the operation of these in such circumstances, tends to impair or utterly destroy the reason, is a fact too well attested by experience to need the aid of argument or speculation. If any means compatible with the system can be devised for affording mental occupation, this evil may be averted and the plan may succeed. It is however, believed that the difficulty of supplying food and exercise, and various other inconveniences that must result from the plan, together with the heavy annual expense that will be in-

curred for the support of the Prison, will cause the abandonment of this system, and induce the establishment of that of alternate labour by day and solitary confinement at night. Should this substitution be made, each cell may probably be converted into two, and work shops may be erected on the Auburn plan, adjacent to the yard walls.

THE HOUSE OF REFUGE,

Now nearly completed, will be conducted under regulations similar to those instituted in the Refuge of New York. To that interesting establishment the Committee now direct the attention of the Board.

THE NEW YORK REFUGE FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENTS,

Is situated in the suburbs, two miles north of the City Hall. The lot of ground, three hundred and twenty by three hundred feet, is enclosed by a wall seventeen feet high and two feet thick. Within the enclosure are two stone buildings, each one hundred and fifty by thirty eight feet. These buildings are separated by a wooden fence, and used, one for boys and the other for girls. The lower story of the boys' refuge is divided into five apartments, for a dining hall, Superintendent's office and shops—the upper story is occupied by two ranges of cells, containing one hundred and thirty-two, on the Auburn plan, and the space, ten feet wide, between the cells and external wall, is furnished with desks and benches, and used as a school room. The lower story of the girls' refuge contains, besides four apartments similar to those in the lower story of the boys' refuge, a parlour and chamber for the matron, a committee room and a Laundry. The second story contains an Hospital, sixty-eight cells, and a Chapel sufficiently large to accommodate one hundred and forty boys, seventy girls, and three hundred visitors,—the keeper's house and workshops are situated in different parts of the yard. The Institution belongs to a Society for the reformation of juvenile delinquents, which was incorporated in 1824—the right of membership is obtained by annual subscription of three dollars, or fifty

dollars constitutes a person a member for life. The officers are a President, six Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, thirty managers, an acting Committee of eighteen gentleman, and a ladies' Committee of thirteen. The immediate government is conducted by a keeper, a matron, a school teacher with two assistants, and a gate keeper. Commitments are made by the police of the City, and by the Courts in the various Counties of the State—but the term of confinement is controlled entirely by the Managers, who make the limit dependent on the merit of the subjects. They are incited to good conduct by admonition, religious instruction and classification. Punishment consists in affixing marks of disgrace, mild castigation, with a whip of leathern strings, and solitary confinement. Portions of the day are allotted to religious exercises, labour, recreation and instruction in the elements of English education—much attention is devoted to the last important subject, and four hours are consumed in it daily.

These regulations are observed in the New York Refuge, with all the attention required by the importance of the object, and the results so far, have proved most satisfactory to the public. The young offender, whose immature perceptions of moral rectitude, and neglected or vicious education had been such as to leave him scarcely able to mark the distinction between right and wrong, instead of being mingled in the vast congregation of villainy assembled in a State Prison, and there tutored in every degree of crime, is here trained up in the daily exercise of all the moral and social obligations; his mind is enlightened and he is instructed in the attainments that will procure him a respectable maintenance. He is taught that his offence, in consideration of his uninstructed youth, will be considered as venial, and that society will receive him as one happily restored to virtue, and entitled to future confidence and support. Nor is he disappointed in the event. When, by a course of good conduct, he has rendered himself worthy of discharge, he is apprenticed, by his own consent, to some respectable mechanic, who contracts with the Managers for continuing to a suitable extent,

the course of education he had already commenced, and for his proper instruction in the trade at which he is engaged. The Managers state that the demand for children of both sexes, is greater than the rules of the Institution will permit them to supply—the best argument that could be advanced in favour of the value of the establishment.

From a report made to the Society by the Managers on the first January last, it appears that the whole number received up to that time, had been two hundred and seventy boys and one hundred and seven girls;—of whom one hundred and eighteen boys and fifty girls had been indentured. The boys to various mechanical employments (out of the city) and as sailors; and the girls as domestic servants. The number constantly varies between one hundred and fifty and two hundred—the proportion of girls is generally about one fourth.

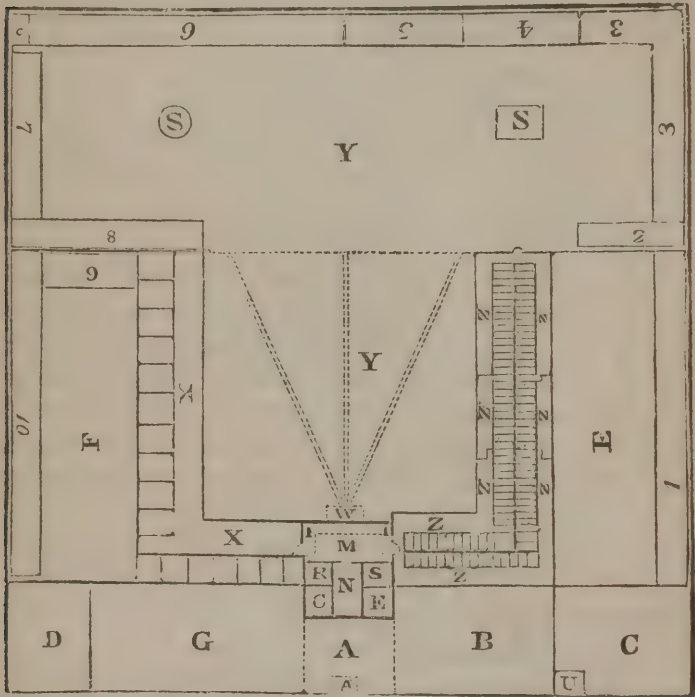
The support of the Institution is derived from various sources. The boys are hired to contractors at prices, which, in consequence of the limited time allotted to labour, average not more than twelve and a half cents per day;—they are employed by shoe makers, chair makers, saddlers and tailors in the city;—the proceeds of their labour amount to a sum about equal to the cost of provision and clothing;—other means are supplied by private subscription, legislative appropriations, donations, and the surplus funds of the Marine Hospital.

THE PENITENTIARY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK,

Which has been used principally as a House of Correction for vagrants, offers nothing in its construction or discipline that deserves particular notice. It is connected with the Alms House and is under the same superintendence. Its occupants will shortly be removed to the Penitentiary now building on an Island in the East River, and will there be employed at work on an extensive quarry.

STATE PRISON AT AUBURN, NEW YORK.

The yard wall of the New York State Prison, at Auburn, encloses an area of nearly six acres, being five hundred feet in length on each side. The ground view of the building presented below, and the following description of them, are extracted from the report made to the Legislature by the agent and keeper in January last.



GROUND VIEW OF THE AUBURN PRISON.

"The exterior line represents the wall which encloses the whole prison ground and buildings."

"A. is the eastern gate." "A. the front yard, about sixty feet square."

"The centre building, or keeper's dwelling, is directly in the rear of, and of the same width, as the front yard, and extends back to the open space between the wings."

"c. is the Clerk's office, and r. an adjoining apartment."

"e. is the Keeper's and Inspectors' office, and s. an adjoining apartment."

"n. is the main hall," passing through the centre, from the front door back to the keeper's hall—"m. is the keeper's hall."

"h. in the rear of the dotted line, is an open space between the keeper's hall and the rear of the building, and affords pass ways from the main building into each of the wings." "The dotted line in rear of the keeper's hall is a strong wooden grating, from the floor to the story next above, a door passing through the centre of which, is always tended by one of the guards." "w. is the back shop, which overlooks the whole interior yard."

"The front part of the basement story of this building contains a kitchen, store rooms and pantries for the keeper's use. The rear part of this story is the wash room for the convicts."

"The story next above, is the one represented in the plate and has been already described."

"The two remaining stories are occupied by the keeper's family."

"This building is about sixty feet wide and about the same height, to the top of the battlements; and projects from the wings in front, twenty-five feet. The cost of this building was from forty to fifty thousand dollars."

"The front of the prison including this building, is about three hundred feet, and each wing extends back two hundred and forty feet."

"B. is the fruit yard and green, of about one hundred feet by ninety."

"G. the garden."

"C. the north front yard."

"U. the guardhouse; the lower story of which is used as a stable and engine house; and the upper, which is on a level with the top of the wall, is occupied by the guard."

"D. is the south front yard." "E. the north rear yard."

"F. the south rear yard."

"Y. the space between the wings, which is a grass plat with gravel walks, represented by the double dotted lines."

"V. the interior yard, covered with gravel; between this and the grass plat, there is an offset of two or three feet, made of stone,

surmounted by a wooden railing, except at the steps; over the centre steps is hung the yard bell."

"SS. reservoirs of water, eight feet deep, one is fifteen and a half feet by forty-three, and the other eighteen feet in diameter. They communicate with each other."

"xx. the hall in front of the large cells in the south wing, which was first built and constructed on the old plan, and is not now used for the confinement of convicts."

"z, z, z, z, z, z, z. the open area between the external wall of the north wing, and the breast work of solitary cells, extending through the centre, in which the convicts are now confined at night."

"1. The new shop built the past season in the north rear yard, and is occupied by the rough, or barrel coopers, its length two hundred and thirty-six feet."

"2. The shop occupied by the fine coopers, or such as manufacture painted ware, such as pails, tubs, keelers, &c. &c.

"3 3. The shop occupied by the manufacturers of joiner's tools."

"4. The shoe shop. 5. Tailor's shop. 6. Weaver's shop. 0 Dye House."

"v. the vault which is thoroughly cleansed at any time by opening the gates of the reservoirs. By this process all the filth is swept through a grated passage between the external wall, into the creek which runs at the foot of it."

"7. The blacksmith's and machine shop. 8. Turner's and Chairmaker's shop."

"In the two last mentioned shops, water power is used."

"9 and 10, shops to be built the ensuing season."

"It will be observed that in the plate, the external wall in the rear of the shops is denoted by a *double line*. The space between these two lines is an avenue in rear of all the shops, which serves as a pass way. This pass way is made sufficiently light by numerous small orifices, cut in the partition, and is designed to enable the keepers to inspect the convicts in the shops without their knowledge, and also for visitors to pass through without going into the shops. Every thing in the shops can be distinctly seen through the orifices, which are mostly covered with glass."

"This improvement, which has been esteemed a very valuable one, has been introduced during the past year."

"The outer walls against which the shops are built are thirty-five feet high on the inside, and the other walls about twenty."
 "The expense of the whole, not including the labor of convicts, was above \$300,000."

The north wing, which is the only one now used for the purpose of imprisonment at night, is constructed upon a plan that originated at Auburn, but to whom the merit of the invention belongs, it is uncertain. Its peculiarity consists in being built within a wall, distant on all sides, eleven feet from the main building or block of cells. This external wall is two hundred and forty feet in length, forty-five in width, and contains three ranges of windows for lighting and ventilating the cells. The latter are seven feet long, three and a half wide, and seven feet high—the doors are hung on the inner surface of the wall, and are latched by the closing of them, preparatory to being permanently fastened by the lock on the outer surface, which is inserted in the wall, midway between the cells. The number of cells is five hundred and fifty-five. A small aperture in the division wall, leading from the back part of each cell to the roof, answers in part the purpose of ventilation, and conveys away the effluvia. A range of galleries surrounding the cells, and extending over half the passage, similar in construction to the common balcony, affords access to the different stories.

Besides the advantages obtained in this mode of building, by the facility with which light and heat are applied, and the ease with which the whole block of cells may be guarded, the possibility of intercourse, however limited, among the prisoners, is entirely precluded. In every particular, except the total prevention of intercourse, the New Wing of the Maryland Penitentiary is not inferior; in this, which is the most important, our plan is objectionable, as the occupants of opposite cells may communicate at least in signs, and unless very strictly guarded, may extend a communication along the range.

A remedy for these evils is proposed by the Keeper of the Auburn Prison—he suggests the erection of a wooden avenue in the centre of the hall, to be floored at the level of each story, and to contain small windows from which the convicts may be seen without being aware that they are observed.

The avenue would in itself, cut off the communication from the opposite cells, and the uncertainty of the prisoner as to the spot at which the guard might at any moment be, would be sufficient to deter him from risking punishment by attempting to converse with his neighbour. The only objection that offers to this expedient, is that it would in part obstruct ventilation—it is, however, left to the consideration of the Board.

The prison is under the general direction of a Board, consisting of five Inspectors, who are appointed every two years by the Governor and Senate. They have the power to appoint the Agent and Keeper and other officers, and to remove them at pleasure—they are required by law to establish all necessary rules and regulations for the government of the Prison, and to report annually its progress and condition to the Legislature—they are also expected frequently to visit and inspect the general discipline, and mechanical operations of the Institution.

The duties of the Agent and Keeper, are various and important. Besides acting the part of a General Supervisor of the Mechanical Departments, he is responsible for the safe keeping of the prisoners, for the just enforcement of the police regulations, and for the conduct of the officers. It is his duty to make all purchases for the supply of the Institution, to contract for the labour of the convicts, and to manage all the fiscal concerns of the house. He is the legal representative of the Institution, and is capable of suing and being sued, in all causes concerning it. The responsibility of his office is such, that he is required to give security to the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars.

He is assisted in his office by a Deputy Keeper, to whom in the absence of the Agent and Keeper, his power is delegated. It is the duty of this officer more immediately to superintend the internal regulations of the house, and especially the police de-

partment, the general management of which is submitted to his direction; he is required constantly to visit the different workshops, in order to observe that the Assistant Keepers are always on the alert, and to report any neglect of duty, or relaxation of vigilance, to the keeper. He attends personally to the discharging of every convict, and to the proper condition of his clothing on his release.

The Assistant Keepers, of whom there are eighteen, are Superintendents of the Mechanical Departments, and guards in the avenues flanking the workshops. The regulations for their conduct while on duty, are rigid, but such as the experience and the wise policy of the Institution have decided to be essential. No Assistant Keeper is allowed while in the yard, to hold a conversation with another, to speak with the prisoners on any other subject than instruction in the work at which they are engaged, or to employ himself in any manner that might divert his attention from the convicts, whom he is required constantly to watch, and to punish in them every breach of silence, or other departure from the rules.

Although the Assistant is vested with the power of inflicting punishment, he is at the same time obliged, in order that the privilege may not be abused, to make a formal report of each case to the Keeper—to state the nature of the offence, and the amount of punishment inflicted. And to prevent any undue severity that might be exercised upon a convict, arising out of a prejudice, founded upon the nature of his crime, the particulars of each case, and the history of the convict are withheld from the Assistant. A regulation founded in equity, and in perfect consistence with the laws, as they prescribe the same *mode* of punishment to all, but graduate the amount, in individual cases, by the *term* of confinement.

Restriction of the Assistant in regard to intercourse with convicts, is an object of the first importance, and a regulation, without which, prison discipline must always remain seriously defective. The liberty of free communication affords opportunity to designing men, to effect, amid so great a variety of character and

talent, almost any object, and exposes the weak and vulnerable to corruption. The many instances of dishonest leagues with convicts on the eve of discharge, and of aiding to alter and counterfeit bank bills that have already occurred in various prisons, afford ample testimony to the truth of this proposition. At Auburn, the opportunity of improper connection of this nature is precluded both by the prohibitory rules, and by the guard which the Deputy Keeper always maintains over the Assistant.

Besides the Deputies termed Assistants Keepers, there are at the Auburn Prison, ten guards, including the sergeant, whose duties are defined in the name of their office, but two are required at the same time for the guard of the yard, their posts commanding a view of its whole extent. They are relieved at intervals of one hour—those who are not on guard, are required to be present in the guard house on the wall—they also perform the various necessary errands to the village. The night watch is kept by two of the Assistant Keepers and two of the guard—the Assistant Keepers watch the solitary cells, and the two guards are stationed in the Keeper's hall, which communicates by a grated door with the north wing. One Assistant and one guard may sleep at intervals—the other Assistant and other guard are required to report to each other, every thirty minutes. The Agent and Keeper, and Deputy Keeper, visit the north wing occasionally during the night, to observe that the guards perform their duty.

Instead of the former system of employing the convicts on materials purchased by the Institution, and vending the articles manufactured, they are now hired to contractors at prices varying from fifteen to fifty cents per day. They are employed as coopers, shoemakers, tailors, weavers, blacksmiths, machinists, gunsmiths and turners. Accounts of labour are kept in the shops by the Assistant Keepers, and handed over weekly to the Clerk, who posts them to the debit of the contractors. At the end of each month, a detailed list of payments made during the month, with vouchers for each item, is made out and transmitted to the Comptroller of the State, and on the 31st October, a general account of receipts and payments is reported to the Legislature.

together with a statement of the proceeds of the convict's labour in each department. The plan is simple and concise, without useless intricacies or superfluities, and is easily comprehended on investigation.

The salaries of officers, and expense for the maintenance of prisoners, are as follows:

Agent and Keeper,	\$1,000 00
Deputy Keeper,	600 00
Clerk,	550 00
Chaplain,	200 00
Physician,	500 00
Eighteen Assistant Keepers at \$450,	8,100 00
Sergeant of the Guard,	300 00
Nine Guards, each \$216	1,944 00
	<hr/>
	\$13,194 00

Provision, Fuel, Bedding and Clothing, Hospital and other contingent expenses, about	21,000 00
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	\$34,194 00
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Hitherto, the profits of the mechanical departments have fallen short of this sum to the amount of about \$10,000 annually, which deficiency has been supplied by annual appropriations of the Legislature. Since the abandonment of the system of conducting its operations on its own account, the condition of the Institution has much improved; and it is now the opinion of the Agent and Keeper, that no further recourse to legislative aid will be necessary. There is no doubt, that were the location more favourable to commerce, a considerable profit would be yielded annually to the State.

We now take a view of the general internal regulations of the Prison, commencing at the hour of breakfast.

At from seven to eight in the morning, the prisoners form into lines, in the shops, at the ringing of a large bell, and are marched through the yard by the Assistant Keepers, in lock step to the

dining hall. Having arranged themselves, each at his proper plate, they stand still until the ringing of a bell by the steward, and then instantly sit down to their meals. The tables are narrow, and the convicts are seated on one side only, and placed face to back, in order that they may not exchange signs. The provision is equally apportioned by the cooks, and forms a part of the daily ration, which is as follows:

10 oz. pork, or 16 oz. beef.

10 oz. unbolted wheat flour.

12 oz. Indian meal.

One half gill molasses.

2 quarts rye, 4 quarts salt.

4 do. vinegar, one and half oz. pepper, } To each 100 ra-
2 and a half bushels potatoes, } tions.

But, as the appetite varies according to the constitution of the convict, convict waiters, with large vessels, pass constantly along the lines, taking from those who raise the right hand, in token that they have a surplus, and furnishing more, to those who signify by raising the left, that they have not enough. The silence and decorum pervading the whole extensive range of tables, and the total absence of embarrassment in taking from some and supplying other convicts, would scarcely be accredited by any other than a witness of the scene. Yet, such is the regularity with which the meal is conducted, that each is necessarily supplied with a quantum sufficient for the gratification of his hunger, and none have any cause of complaint. The arrangement is humane and creditable, and leaves open no field for the disgraceful bartering with surplus provision, shamelessly tolerated in other prisons. When a sufficient time has elapsed for making the repast, the convicts are marched back to the shops in an order inverted from that in which they had entered; the dinner arrangement is similar.

While at labour, each man maintains his allotted post, and is allowed to leave it on no occasion other than absolute necessity. Pretexts are rendered impossible by the shop arrangements, which provide waiters for handing materials and drink, removing

rubbish, distributing tools, and taking away the manufactured articles. All this is performed in silence, and intimations of every requisition are made only in signs. The secret influence of the guard concealed in the side avenues is represented to be a powerful agent in maintaining this regulation. As the attention of the Assistant in the shop is sometimes necessarily diverted from the body of convicts, by a particular one who requires instruction, portions of them would be enabled, did it not exist, to indulge in occasional communications. But the known presence of this dreaded inspector, whom their imagination invests with infallibility, and the certainty of immediate punishment on every breach of the rule, secures them in a silence as complete, as if they were devoid of the faculty of speech.

Communications with friends from without, is as strictly prohibited, except on the eve of death: at which time, relatives or friends are permitted all necessary intercourse through the medium of the Agent and Keeper.

To deny to the convict the consolation of seeing occasionally his relatives or friends, may appear a cruel and unnecessary restriction. But its ills are more than cancelled by the prevention of others, which this kind of communication almost always occasions. It is an almost invariable custom of visitants to convicts to inspire them with hopes of pardon, which must end in disappointment, and consequent discontent and insubordination. Their friends too, are engaged by them in fruitless efforts for this purpose, which are a source of much trouble, and often of considerable useless expense.

No regular task is prescribed, but every man is required to perform as much labour as he can, under the direction of the assistant.

After the labours of the day, the convicts are marched in lock step to the wash room adjoining the kitchen, where, mush and molasses in a wooden platter, and water in a can has been placed together in rows by the cook—they stoop without breaking their ranks, take up their supper and drink and proceed to the cells.

On a general view of these several regulations, it will be seen that indulgence, forms no part of the plan. That the whole system is one of coercion, simple, energetic and decisive; and secured from the liability of abuse, by the responsibilities attached to the several grades of officers, each one controlled by a superior authority, and the whole by the public at large.

The Sabbath is devoted to religious exercises and to instruction, in reading, writing and arithmetic. The former duty is performed by the resident chaplain, and the latter by volunteer students from the Theological Seminary in the village;—the whole under the general superintendence of the chaplain. This gentleman besides performing the Sabbath duties, visits the convicts in the cells; and as he is the only human being with whom they are at liberty to enter into familiar conversation, his visits are always of the most grateful character;—his instruction and advice are received with gratitude, and the impressions made are deep and permanent. There is perhaps, no field upon which the duties of this profession can be exercised with more personal gratification, or with greater advantage to the subject, than in a prison, under such regulations as are here established. Every incitement urges to the task of reformation, and every circumstance contributes to success.

STATE PRISON AT SING SING.

The State Prison at Sing Sing, on the east bank of the North river, is founded on a bed of marble, which forms a part of an extensive quarry, and is built of the same material. It is erected parallel with the river, and at the distance of about thirty feet from it. The Prison is four hundred and eighty feet in length, forty in width, and contains four stories. The number of cells, when completed will be eight hundred. The construction is nearly the same as that of the north wing of the Auburn Prison—differing only in the manner in which the cells are lighted. A small window being situated opposite each in the external wall. The doors of the cells are hung on the outer surface of the walls, and are in part, fastened by a lock peculiar in its construction,

and so applied as to lock or unlock fifty doors at once. On the side of the Prison towards the River, the yard is to be extended three hundred feet into it, and will be made of the refuse stone from the quarry. The keeper's house on one side, and the kitchen, hospital and chapel on the other, will adjoin the ends of the Prison, and extend about eighty feet towards the river.

The convicts are guarded by sentries, stationed on the heights of the quarry east of the Prison, which form the only wall on that side.

The Commissioners appointed by the legislature for the erection of the building, are Messrs. Hopkins, Tibbetts and Allen. The immediate superintendence is entrusted to Captain Lynds, formerly agent and keeper of the Auburn Prison. The work which was commenced with one hundred convicts, who were removed from Auburn for the purpose, has been performed entirely by convicts, and is of the best and most durable character, besides presenting a very beautiful appearance.

The number at present confined, is four hundred and ninety-eight, who, for the most part, have been removed from the State Prison in the city, which has recently been vacated and closed. The officers, besides the keeper, are a deputy keeper, fourteen assistant keepers, and fourteen guards. General regulations for the government of the Prison, are the same, so far as they may be applied, as those which are practised at Auburn, with the exception that the convicts take their food with them into the cells, where they are locked up, while the keepers retire to their own meals at home.

No regular system of employing the convicts with a view to their supplying by labour the funds of the institution, has as yet been established. The convicts being all engaged at work on the Prison and improvements. When they will be ready to prepare marble for sale, there is no doubt from the vicinity of the city, and the facility of transportation, that the results of their labour will not only defray all expenses, but yield a considerable surplus to the State.

The scattered state of the convicts, some engaged in constructing the wharves, some at work on the Prison, and others variously dispersed through the quarry and yard, inspires the mind on the first view with the belief, that any attempt at escape must inevitably be followed by success. But, inquiry into the secret magic by which they are controlled ascertains to the spectator, that even here, although mingled in hundreds, and ranging over so large a space, in every particular relating to themselves, they think and act but as individuals;—that policy proposed the total prevention of intercourse, and that energy and vigilance secure effectually the observance of the institution.

To the talents and persevering industry of Capt. Lynds, the public is indebted for a satisfactory decision of the long doubtful question, whether the Penitentiary system could be so improved, as to relieve a community from the burden of supporting its criminals, and tend at the same time to their reformation. The construction of the Prisons at Auburn and Sing Sing, and the discipline established in them by his exertions, offer evidences of this important fact, the truth of which requires observation alone, to be acknowledged.

Having concluded their remarks on particular Prisons, the Committee offer the following opinions as the general results of their observation.

That labour by day and solitary confinement at night, is the best system that has been devised for the punishment of criminals. That it is the most economical in practice, and the most effectual in producing reformation.

That in order more fully to attain the latter object, prohibition of intercourse among the convicts is a regulation indispensably necessary, and one that may be established and maintained by a proper degree of decision and vigilance.

That restriction of intercourse, by depriving the convicts of the means of plotting insurrection, is the strongest weapon that can be used for keeping them in subjection.

That communications further than may be necessary for instruction in branches of mechanical labour, should not be tolerated between the convicts and the Assistant or Deputy Keepers.

That the Deputy Keepers while on duty, should be required to confine their attention to the subjects embraced in it, and to refrain from conversations with each other.

That intercourse between convicts and their friends, either in person or by written communication, is productive of no good effects, and is incompatible with a proper discipline.

That punishment of youthful offenders, by imprisonment with mature subjects of crime, is pernicious in its consequences, and disproportionate to their relative degrees of guilt. That institutions for a separate mild correction of juvenile delinquents, combining a portion of religious and school education, with instruction in some branch of mechanical employment, may answer the double purpose of fulfilling the requisitions of justice, and of directing the guilty-through-inexperience, to virtuous pursuits.

As relates to the manufacturing operations of the Institutions they have visited, the Committee have derived no hints from them, which they believe could be applied to an improvement of that department of the Maryland Penitentiary. Long experience and attention, devoted particularly to that subject, have been rewarded with such a system, as produces at present, greater pecuniary results than are realized in any other similar institution.

That the police regulations of the Maryland Penitentiary have been inadequate to much improvement of morals, must be acknowledged; but their imperfection is to be attributed to the original disadvantages in the arrangement and construction of the buildings; and not to any neglect of that important object. As much has been done for the promotion of it as could be effected with the means that were possessed, but the sole circumstance of associating the convicts at night, is sufficient to destroy the effect of almost every regulation for the purpose that could be established.

With the opportunity that will shortly be obtained of confining the convicts in separate cells, the evils of night communication will be obviated. An application of the general rules in relation to the conduct of prisoners and officers, suggested above, together with the continuance of such as already exist for education and religious instruction, will advance the system as near to perfection as it may be brought; and under this impression, the Committee earnestly recommend to the Board, their adoption. To secure their enforcement, many others will necessarily present themselves and will attract future consideration, should these be approved.

In regard to the regulations for the conduct of officers, the Committee would have it understood that there is nothing local in the motive by which they are induced to propose them. That they deem them essential only as they serve to the just application of the principles upon which the general system is founded.

The Committee close their remarks by again adverting to the importance of a house of refuge, for juvenile delinquents. The advantageous results of those in Boston and New York have already so much excited public admiration, as to have induced the establishment of a refuge in Philadelphia. Whether an institution similar in purpose ought not to be erected in Baltimore, is a subject worthy of consideration, and is recommended to the attention of the Board, should they deem it within their province to suggest such a measure to the Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

GEO. KEYSER, *one of the Directors.*

JOSEPH OWENS, *Keeper.*

JAMES M'EVOY, *Clerk.*

October, 1828.